

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Listing of Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) An aluminum hydroxide composition having diminished tendency to cause discoloration on heating at 177°C of a plastic composition whose major polymeric component is polyvinyl chloride, comprising aluminum hydroxide and an amount, effective in diminishing said discoloration, of at least one inorganic perchlorate salt selected from the group consisting of alkali metal perchlorates and alkaline earth metal perchlorates.
2. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, wherein said effective amount is in the range from 0.03 parts by weight to 3 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide.
3. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, wherein said inorganic perchlorate is sodium perchlorate.
4. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 3, wherein said perchlorate is sodium perchlorate monohydrate.

5. (Currently Amended) A plastic composition having diminished tendency to discolor on heating at 177°C in the presence of aluminum hydroxide, comprising polyvinyl chloride, from 15 parts by weight to 150 parts by weight aluminum hydroxide per 100 parts by weight of polyvinyl chloride, and an amount, effective in diminishing said tendency to discolor, of at least one inorganic perchlorate salt selected from the group consisting of alkali metal perchlorates ~~and alkaline earth metal perchlorates~~.

6 - 7 (Canceled)

8. (Original) The composition of claim 5, wherein the amount of said inorganic perchlorate is in the range from 0.03 parts by weight to 3 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide.

9. (Original) The composition of claim 5, wherein said inorganic perchlorate is sodium perchlorate.

10. (Original) The composition of claim 5, additionally comprising at least one plasticizer.

11. (Original) The composition of claim 5, additionally comprising at least one heat stabilizer.

12. (Original) The composition of claim 10, wherein said at least one plasticizer is selected from the group consisting of dialkyl phthalates and trialkyl trimellitates having independently in each alkyl group seven to eleven carbon atoms.

13. (Original) The composition of claim 11, wherein said at least one heat stabilizer is a barium, calcium, magnesium, strontium, or zinc salt of a non-nitrogenous monocarboxylic acid having 6-24 carbon atoms.

14. (Withdrawn) A masterbatch composition adapted for safe storage, transport, and compounding with a plastic composition whose major polymeric component is polyvinyl chloride, comprising aluminum hydroxide and at least one inorganic perchlorate salt selected from the group consisting of alkali metal perchlorates and alkaline earth metal perchlorates, said masterbatch containing from 7 parts by weight to 500 parts by weight of said perchlorate salt per 100 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide.

15. (Withdrawn) The masterbatch composition of claim 14, containing from 30 parts by weight to 150 parts by weight of said inorganic perchlorate salt per 100 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide.

16. (Withdrawn) The masterbatch composition of claim 14, wherein said inorganic perchlorate is sodium perchlorate.

17. (Withdrawn) The masterbatch composition of claim 16, wherein said inorganic perchlorate is sodium perchlorate monohydrate.
18. (Withdrawn) A method of diminishing the tendency to cause discoloration on heating at 177°C of an aluminum hydroxide containing plastic composition whose major polymeric component is polyvinyl chloride, comprising the steps of mixing polyvinyl chloride with a masterbatch according to claim 14, and adding thereto additional aluminum hydroxide such that the composition contains from 15 parts by weight to 150 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide per 100 parts by weight of polyvinyl chloride and from 0.03 parts by weight to 3 parts by weight of said inorganic perchlorate salt per 100 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide.
19. (Withdrawn) An insulated electrical conductor comprising a metallic conductor, a first insulating layer comprising flexible polyvinyl chloride surrounding said conductor, and a second layer surrounding said first insulating layer, said second layer comprising the composition of claim 6
20. (Withdrawn) The insulated electrical conductor of claim 19, wherein said second layer comprises a second flame retardant.

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21. (Withdrawn) The insulated electrical conductor of claim 20, wherein said second flame retardant is antimony trioxide.

22. (Currently Amended) In ~~an aluminum hydroxide containing~~ a plastic composition whose major polymeric constituent is polyvinyl chloride, the improvement ~~consisting of~~ comprising the inclusion therein of:

(A) from 15 parts by weight to 150 parts by weight aluminum hydroxide per 100 parts by weight of polyvinyl chloride; and

(B) an amount, effective in diminishing discoloration of said composition upon heating at 177°C, of at least one inorganic perchlorate salt selected from the group consisting of alkali metal perchlorates ~~and alkaline earth metal perchlorates.~~

23. (New) The plastic composition of claim 22 wherein the inorganic perchlorate salt is present in the range of from 0.03 part by weight to 3 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of the aluminum hydroxide.

24. (New) The plastic composition of claim 23 wherein the alkali metal perchlorate is sodium perchlorate.